

HR Weekly Podcast

1/16/2008

Today is January 16, 2008, and welcome to the HR Weekly Podcast from the State Office of Human Resources. This week's topic concerns hazardous weather.

In light of the forecast calling for winter weather in portions of the state tonight, the agency human resources offices should make preparations for a possible delayed opening or closing of State offices due to hazardous weather. During hazardous weather or a declaration of emergency, all essential and direct care services must be maintained; consequently, human resources offices should identify essential employees who must be present at the job site, regardless of the hazardous weather conditions. To determine whether a State office is closed or delayed in opening, non-essential employees should stay tuned to the local broadcast or go to the Office of Human Resources' website at www.ohr.sc.gov and click on the State Employee's Weather Alert link located on the left side of the computer screen. The link will take you to the South Carolina Emergency Management Division website where you will find the delayed openings or closings of State offices by county.

The Governor has the authority to excuse State employees for up to five days of leave with pay from reporting to work during hazardous weather or emergency conditions. The Governor exercises his authority generally through an executive order indicating the counties affected and the date and times of the office closings or delayed openings. If the Governor does not excuse the time missed due to hazardous weather, the employee has three options to account for the lost work time. Employees may 1) use annual or compensatory leave; 2) take leave without pay, or; 3) make up time lost from work.

Should a non-essential employee come to work, the agency director should send the employee home unless the employee's personal safety would be jeopardized. If an employee ignores a directive to leave the work site, time worked must still be counted; however, an employee may be subject to disciplinary action.

If an employee lives in a county that has been declared closed due to hazardous weather, but works in a county where it has not been declared closed, the employee should report to work unless the employee's personal safety would be in jeopardy. If safety is an issue, the employee should contact his supervisor and request leave. If a declaration of emergency is not issued by the Governor, all State government employees are expected to report to work as usual.

If the Governor issues an executive order declaring a state of emergency, the Office of Human Resources will contact the agency human resources offices to clarify the dates and times of the State office closings or delayed openings, the counties affected, and instructions to employees to make up time lost due to the closings or to provide leave with pay for absences from work. For further information, please refer to the Hazardous Weather Frequently Asked Questions on OHR's website or call your HR Consultant at 737-0900.

Thank you.